Home Life on Early Ranches of Southwest Texas

CHAPTER XVII

David Karbach
Comal County

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MR. AND MRS. DAVID KARBACH

"THE German farmer is offered a new existence through colonization in Texas; commerce, shipping and industry a new impetus. There is a future for all of us if we know how to use our opportunity," declared His Highness, Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, Commissioner General for the protection of German immigrants in Texas in the report of his visit to Texas in 1844-1845.

These reports caused David Karbach to decide to leave Germany, and join the group of German immigrants bound for New Braunfels, Texas. Conditions in Germany were so oppressed at that time. He believed his children would have a better opportunity in the new country.

According to reports from Prince Carl, who had been in Texas making plans for the colonists, they could retain their language, customs, practices and habits. The principle of retaining the German traits and characteristics could very well be subjected to the constitution and laws of the country. And the Fatherland was over-populated; it did not afford an opportunity for expansion; it could not nourish all of its people on its soil; and although there was lots of work to do there were by far too many workers.

Continuing his report the Prince described the land purchased for the immigrants, "On the right of Comal Creek lies a fertile prairie which reaches south to a ridge of hills. On its left bank there is a richly wooded bottom land stretching to the cliffs, which are covered with cedar, oak and elm. These cliffs, with the hills rising gradually back of them toward the north resemble the Black Forest. Through the bottom land flows the Comal River which, gushing out of the rock in seven large springs, shortly reached a width of twenty paces, and becoming larger and larger, rushes along a swift mountain stream. The water is very deep and clear as a crystal." To be sure there were northers in the winter, sometimes three or four a week. Generally they arrived at night, accompanied by a strong wind and heavy tropical rain. The rain might continue a day or two at the most, after which the norther still blows, but the sky is clear and sunny. The weather is then beautiful again, and the temperature is more or less like that of Germany on a beautiful spring day.

Throughout the winter the prairies are covered with green grass. When it becomes dry it is burned, after which the prairie looks black, producing rather a dreary effect. Only one shower is necessary to erase the black appearance and to enable the fresh grass to shoot up and cover the plains with its refreshing greenery. The Texas farmer would not have to devote either time or work to the storing up of feed for his stock for winter, because his cattle would find good grazing on the prairies in the winter as well as during the rest of the year. Cattle of every kind are, because of their rapid increase, very profitable. The pastures in Texas are as intensive as the sky, and it will be many years before the population increases enough to limit them. There is no reason to keep the cattle in a pen. Only the beasts of burden which are used for riding are kept in stables and fed corn to keep them strong for work.

"The virgin soil has no need for fertilizer. It is quite feasible that two crops can be going in one year. The first crop of corn could be harvested in May or June. Corn may be planted again immediately and harvested in October or November.

"There is no spectacle more fascinating than the prairies of the West, during the months of April, May and June," declared Prince Carl. "They spread themselves out like a costly carpet of richly green, with an embroidery of exquisite flowers of divers colors. One cannot but be apprehensive that the hoof of his horse does not trample these marvels of nature and disarrange their harmony. The rarest cactus blooms, of all kind of colors, are true embellishments of nature. The lignum vitae spreading its fragrant odors and the catalpa with its large white blossoms offer a restful place for the eye."

It was a healthy climate. The northers purify the air. The prairies and woods of Texas interchange which gives the Gulf breeze a better chance to sweep over the country.

So in December, 1845, David Karbach and his second wife, Caroline, nee Moewe, with eight children, three of whom were Mrs. Karbach's step-children set sail for Indianola, or Carlshaven.

David Karbach was a master mechanic. In compliance with the suggestions for colonists he brought with him all the tools that would be needed for some time. While he expected eventually to engage in the ranching industry he knew that he would ply his trade for a while. Each colonist was allowed to bring with him all the tools and equipment needed free of duty, so long as that import did not exceed $500.

Prince Carl advised each colonist to bring with him wagons as needed, horses, farm implements and household goods. The articles that would be needed on the boat should be separated and placed in strong chests in order to protect them from the salt air.

They were advised to bring one or more wagons, depending upon the size of the family; two kinds of plows and harrows—heavy and light; also all instruments necessary for garden and vineyard cultivation, such as spades, hoes, mattocks, etc., with handles belonging to them; various kinds of knives; complete harness outfits for plow, wagon, and complete saddles, as well as tools for making such things; ropes and lines which are indispensable for the trip from port to the new home and for the building of a house; tools for building a house and for furniture work. To this list they were advised, should be included whatever is needed by the bricklayer, carpenter, and furniture maker, except the ax and hatchet.

"We are not concerned here with what is needed for fine work, but that without which a man cannot easily exist," wrote Prince Carl.

He advised bringing along locks, bolts, hinges for doors and windows, iron clamps, hoes, nails of various kinds and in large quantity; iron chains of different strength and sizes, which are used for building the house and for dragging

The old David Karbach home, built in 1858 and added to in the intervening years. Mrs. Fritz Karbach and daughter, "Millie," are shown on the porch.

The first Methodist Episcopal Church in Comalton where the David Karbach's attended church and where Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Karbach were married. It was erected before the Civil War. This church has been made over into a residence.

logs from the woods, and later on for hitching up oxen; a box with window glasses already cut into panes; and if one has frames he should bring them along; a lump of putty and a small diamond to cut panes to fit the frames.

Utensils and furnishings for the kitchen and table should be made of material not easily breakable. Copper, zinc and tin utensils are the most practical and useful for the kitchen; for the table wooden or zinc dishes, plates and cups are most practical. Knives, forks and spoons should be brought along, but they should not be made of silver or any other expensive metal. The old German butter churn should not be forgotten.

A sufficient quantity of bed linen and warm bed covering should be brought along. Mattress covers should be filled with hay before departure, because they would probably be useful on the boat. Later in this country they could be filled with hay, corn shucks, and dried Spanish moss and used for mattresses.

Staple Articles From Homeland

Articles of clothing included heavy wide-sleeved jackets for the men, made of cheap gray material, heavy leather belts, felt hats with high crowns, waterproof hip boots, unusually strong shoes and leggings. All clothing for men and women should be practical garments of good durable materials.

They also brought their hunting weapons which included double and single barrel guns; hunting bags, powder horns, bowie knives and other weapons that could be used in hunting game and also for defense.

They were advised to bring along German pipes and a small provision of tobacco, "to aid the appetite and for philosophical consolation in grief and worry." Matches should be left at home, but flint rock and a piece of steel and a sponge of sulphur string should be included.

The colonists had garden seeds, flower plants, and cuttings of vines and fruit trees. There is a rosebush on the old Karbach homestead today that came from the original plant brought over by Mrs. Karbach. She also brought her spinning wheel and iron bedsteads.

At last the family with its worldly goods boarded the ship just before Christmas, 1845. It was a slow, tedious journey of several weeks, during which Fredericke, the six-year-old daughter died and was buried at sea. Thus a sad family landed at Indianola early in March, 1846, but the wild flowers were blooming everywhere and the beauty of the new country gladdened their hearts. Chests had to be opened and the articles sunned and aired. Every particle of rust was removed from the articles made of steel or iron.

After a few days of rest Mr. Karbach, his son Carl, and daughter Williamina, left with the caravan of ox-drawn wagons for New Braunfels to build a house and get ready for Mrs. Karbach and the little ones. Caroline, the other stepdaughter, remained with her until she was able to come on after the arrival of the new baby.

Each settler was given one lot in town on which to build a house, and a ten-acre plot just outside of town on which to grow additional vegetables and feed—usually corn. Mr. Karbach was delighted to find his ten-acre allotment was in the little fertile valley adjoining the beautiful Comal Springs. He knew he could raise good grain in such rich soil.

The most important thing was to build a house for Mrs. Karbach and the little ones. And this was a big undertaking. Trees had to be felled which would provide logs about 14 feet long and 10-12 inches in diameter. They had to be hewed and notched on the ends in such a way as to fit closely, one on top of the other. Two or three logs were fastened together by a chain to which were hitched a yoke of oxen and dragged to the building lot.

It was a slow tedious task, but at last the house containing three rooms was finished and Carl went after his mother and the little ones. They started with joyous hearts for once again the family would be reunited in the home of their dreams. They were probably three days enroute from Indianola, or Carlshaven, to Victoria. Once again the grim angel of death visited the Karbach family. Carl contracted dysentery and died in Victoria. The caravan of German immigrants in a new land had already formed, through a common cause, a deep and lasting bond of friendship. So each was ready to do everything possible for Mrs. Karbach and her family. Sympathetic hands built a coffin, crude to be sure, but it was the best they could do.

"Shall we bury the body here?" they asked her.

"No, I could not face my husband without my son's body," she declared sorrowfully.

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One of the wagons was emptied and the coffin placed in it. The driver with the corpse came on ahead of the caravan. The family belonging in that wagon was cared for by other members of the party.

After Mrs. Karbach and the children arrived at New Braunfels work began in earnest. Mr. Karbach and the boys were busy early and late building fences to enclose their lot and fencing the ten-acre plot which they had drawn. Corn had to be planted and the garden spaded and made ready for planting. They planted potatoes, and also the garden seed—beans, lettuce and cabbage brought with them from the homeland. It was late for spring planting, but the soil was rich and they felt that they could make a good crop that first year.

There was no outside help because every one was occupied with his own work and had plenty to do. While the Karbach's were not wealthy in the old country, it was hard to do without the comforts with which they had grown up, and supplant it with the difficulties and hardships of the pioneer country. In the homeland the labor had been hard and strenuous, but Mrs. Karbach could serve a hot, sustaining meal. The house had always been warm. After the evening meal Mr. Karbach could enjoy a glass of wine or beer. In the evening they could sleep on a mattress—though it might be straw—and they had the protection of a good roof against the elements. The more it rained or stormed outside, the more each member of the family could enjoy pulling the blankets over his head and sleep until the next morning in comfort and peace.

But now it was different. Mr. Karbach came in at night tired and worn out from heavy, unaccustomed work. Mrs. Karbach was tired out too, from washing and ironing with the meagerest equipment. Cooking was done in an open fireplace in one of the three rooms. Bread was baked in a three-legged copper Dutch skillet (still a prized possession of one of the grand-daughters).

Wool secured from small flocks of sheep, and from some of the nearby larger flocks, had to be scoured, carded, spun into thread and woven into material and clothes made for the family. Every garment for each member of the family was hand-made by Mrs. Karbach and the girls. They did mending and knitted the stockings. Much of the sewing was done at night by poor light.

At first lights were provided by placing wicks made of a narrow flannel cloth in a pan of home-rendered tallow, the wick being turned up to emit a small, flickering light. Later they used candles which were molded at home. These molds are still in possession of the family. Great was their happiness when the little brass oil lamps became available.

Mr. Karbach had been allotted 320 acres of land as head of the family, and Carl 160 acres. Both tracts lay on the Concho River in Runnels county. They decided it was too dangerous to live so far away from the settlement, so both tracts were sold for 50 cents an acre without their ever having seen them.

David Karbach took up his old trade of blacksmith. There was lots of work for him to do.

Happy With Each Other

The success of the Karbach home lay in its ability to build up happiness in the home and in the community. Mrs. Karbach probably suffered more from homesickness than any of the others. Her people still lived in Germany. Mr. Karbach had only one brother but he had not been associated with him for several years. The children loved the breezy pioneer life. They sang around the fireside during the evenings and they all liked to read. They kept up their subscriptions to the German papers and magazines. *Gartenlaube* was one of the favorites. It contained recipes, household hints, knitting and crochet patterns, fashions and stories. Sometimes Mr. and Mrs. Karbach would tell stories of their childhood, and of Germany.

Many of the settlers had brought musical instruments with them and these included horns, flutes, trombones, bass violins and cornets. The Karbach's did not own instruments at first. But they enjoyed the community singings. *De Wacht am Rhein, Heidenroeslein,* or *Rose on the Prairie* were among their favorites. The *Trent Euch Des Lebens* was a jolly song which they sang and danced to its rhythm. One of the favorite church songs was *Eine Feste Burg ist unser Gott,* or "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

They attended community dances which were held at a dance hall on a back street called *Lutige Strumpf,* meaning "Happy Stocking." Music was furnished by a group of the settlers who used the instruments they brought over with them. These were happy occasions, the old folks and young folks dancing together. These dances included the "Polka Mazurka," the Schottische and the waltz. The younger Karbach children took dancing lessons from a dancing master who also came over with the colonists.

It is claimed by some historians that the German immigrants who came to Texas in great numbers from 1845 to 1850 brought along an invisible passen-

Safeway Stores Buy Prize Livestock

ANNUAL auction of baby beef at the Interstate Junior Livestock Show was held Thursday, April 6, at Treasure Island on San Francisco Bay. Total sales of all cattle judged came to more than $35,500.

Scores of youthful western farmers and ranchers thus received tangible proof of the value of breeding and raising fine livestock. Sales represented an advance of $6,066 over market prices.

Of all baby beef sold, the greatest number were bought for Safeway Stores, Inc.: 203 head, or 62.5 per cent of all cattle in judging competition. Prices paid for Safeway amounted to 59 per cent of the total. And of all exhibitors, two young stockmen were especially pleased. They had won Safeway's annual scholarships. Representing the Future Farmers of America was award-winning Robert Williamson, 18-year-old graduate of the Madera Union High School in California. Williamson plans to start using his scholarship at California State Polytechnic School, San Luis Obispo, this fall.

Clarence Godecke, Jr., 4-H member from Minden, Nevada, a six-foot five-inch graduate of Douglas County High, won another award. Godecke, who is also 18 years old, plans to start at the University of California's School of Agriculture at Davis, this fall.

R. W. Doe, Safeway vice-president, presenting the scholarships at the annual banquet that evening, pointed out that they are awarded because the winners had shown special talents in raising livestock and had maintained unusually high standards in their school work.

At the Saturday morning auction, April 8, of lambs and hogs, Safeway Stores bought 49 per cent of all lambs which went through the auction ring. They also bought $474.78 of hogs at the auction.

ger, *das deutsche Lieb*. It was natural then, that the first singing society the "Germania" in Texas should be organized in New Braunfels on March 2, 1850. This was composed of male voices only. Ten years later the "Concordia," for mixed voices was organized. Members of the Karbach family enjoyed and participated in both.

The children attended the first school in New Braunfels which was taught by Hermann Seele. This school was held in the open under the branches of a big tree until a school house could be built. That tree is still standing on Coll Street under which is a marker bearing the following inscription, "In memory of Hermann Seele who was the first German school teacher West of the Colorado River. He taught school and delivered sermons under the shade of these trees in the year of A. D. 1845."

In 1858 the Karbach family once again felt the need for expansion. The boys loved the out-of-doors and wanted to engage in the cattle industry. Mr. Karbach was a good marksman and great hunter. His opportunities in the old country for hunting had been limited since much of it was a private game preserve.

They bought ranch land about five miles from town in preference to rich farming land. There was plenty of wood on the hillsides. They cultivated some land in the valley, raising mostly feed.

At last David Karbach had an opportunity to hunt. He loved the sport it afforded. Rabbits had been considered good game in the old country. Here he reveled in being able to kill deer, bear, turkeys and wild hogs. Then, too, the family enjoyed the meat. They fished in the Comal and Guadalupe Rivers.

Mrs. Karbach Was Good Cook

Mrs. Karbach was an excellent cook. Among the favorite dishes for which she was famed was *scharzsauer*, a congealed pig's feet salad to which she added dumplings, prunes and spices. *Schammklosze* was a fluffy dumpling seasoned with croutons and was served with chicken or any kind of wild game. *Stolle*, a cake similar to a coffee cake was another favorite. They were great kraut eaters. Mrs. Karbach's recipe was considered one of the best in the community.

While moving to the ranch was a dream realized for Mr. Karbach and the boys, it was an added responsibility to Mrs. Karbach. She and her husband were intensely interested in the children having the best educational opportunities the community afforded. In 1856 New Braunfels had achieved a distinction when its citizens voted to levy the first tax for school purposes in Texas. David Karbach had voted for this tax in order that his children might have the advantages of a good education.

It was impractical for the children to go back and forth to school from the ranch. They kept the house in town so Mrs. Karbach could stay with the children during the week and send them to school. On week-ends she brought the children to the ranch where she cleaned the house and cooked much of the food to be used during the following week. The house was on the main road that came up from the ranch country to New Braunfels. Many people enroute to town made it a point to spend the night there. They were always welcome. Mrs. Karbach would serve a good supper, then the family would sit around the fireside visiting with their guest. It was a social occasion for each of them, and frequently much information was gained that the Karbach family considered it an educational event.

The year the family moved out to the ranch the Methodist Church was built in Comalton. The Karbach's had been members of the Lutheran Church before coming to America. But the family had been attending meetings held by a circuit-rider Methodist preacher, a highly educated man by the name of DeVilbiss. The father, mother, Fritz, John, Sophie and Emily joined the Methodist Church and became loyal workers. The trip to church was made in an ox cart and usually required several hours for the five miles. They even walked to Cibolo to attend conference. Frequently, Mrs. Karbach took a basket-dinner and spread it with her neighbors. The elder son, Fritz, was the Sunday School

10. JUNIOR RIFLES.

By MONROE H. GOODE, *An Experienced Big Game Hunter and Recognized Shooting Authority.*

RIFLE shooting, more than any other sport, develops self-control, concentration, and determination. Boys like sports that are manly, and rifle shooting therefore makes a strong appeal to them. Clean, healthful outdoor sports calling for a high degree of skill have worked wonders in the development of good character, and the boy of today is the man of tomorrow.

Common sense dictates that the small boy should be started with a .22-caliber, single-shot arm incorporating adequate safety features with good barrel length, both of which help to prevent accidents. It would be nothing short of sheer folly to entrust a repeating rifle to a child, as his young mind may have difficulty in grasping the idea that "Rifle, him all time loaded," as the Indian says. Proper safety levers on a rifle teach the youngster the importance of keeping the safety "on" except when he is ready to shoot, and long barrels make it more difficult for a boy to drape himself over the muzzle or business end of the arm.

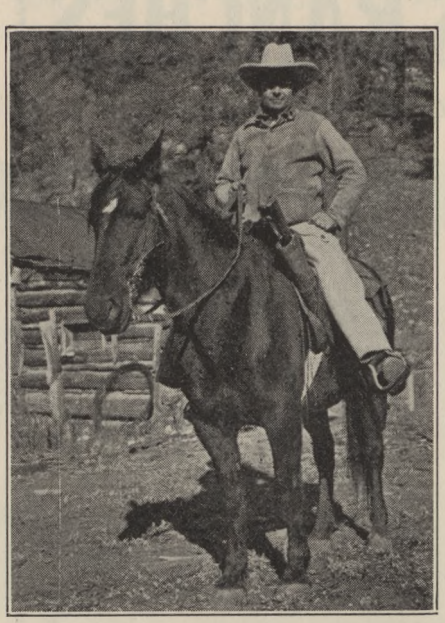
Junior rifles should be of the bolt-action persuasion, as such arms are always fitted with safeties and lately are more inclined to have aperture (peep) sights. Since adults eventually are compelled to rely on aperture sights, the earlier in life the boy adapts himself to their use the better.

A youngster should be started off with a light-weight, inexpensive, .22-caliber rim fire rifle, and as his age and proficiency increase, he should be given better grade arms of heavier weight. The following arms have been listed with this thought in mind:

Rifles for Young Boys.—Remington Model 41-P, "Targetmaster," a bolt-action, single-shot rifle with 27-inch barrel, aperture rear sight adjustable for windage and elevation, and hooded front sight; weight about 5 1/3 pounds.

Winchester Model 68, a bolt-action, single-shot arm with 27-inch barrel, aperture receiver rear sight adjustable for windage and elevation, and hooded front sight; weight about 5 pounds.

Savage Model 3-S, a bolt-action, single-shot rifle with 26-inch barrel, aperture receiver rear sight adjustable for windage and elevation, and hooded front sight; weight 4 1/2 pounds.



MONROE H. GOODE
the author on a New Mexico hunt in 1938

Rifles for Older Boys.—Mossberg Model 35A-LS, a single-shot target rifle with 26-inch heavy barrel, Lyman aperture receiver rear sight, adjustable for windage and elevation, hooded front sight, stock especially designed for prone target shooting, and large forearm. Stock has the minimum drop at comb and heel, is fitted with sling swivels, and drilled for telescope sights. Weight 8 1/4 pounds.

Stevens Model 418-1/2 "Walnut Hill," a bolt-action, single-shot rifle with 26-inch barrel, sling, aperture rear tang sight adjustable for windage and elevation, and hooded front sight; weight 6 1/2 pounds.

Stevens Model 418 "Walnut Hill" Junior rifle, a lever-action, single-shot rifle with 26-inch barrel, adjustable tang rear sight, sling swivels and sling; weight about 6 1/2 pounds.

Stevens Model 417-1/2 "Walnut Hill," a single-shot, lever-action rifle with 28-inch barrel, adjustable tang rear aperture sight, sling swivels and sling; weight 8 pounds.

NUMBER TEN OF A SERIES

superintendent for 30 years. Through the efforts of the Karbach children and other devoted church members, the church was kept up, and when the old church building was beyond repair, the Karbach Memorial Methodist Church was built on San Antonio Street, perpetuating by its name the work of these pioneers. The children of John and Fritz Karbach donated a beautiful memorial window of this church.

Mrs. Karbach loved to watch her children and ponder over their different traits and characteristics. Fritz and John were slower in motion and more even tempered than William. They were especially interested in the spiritual welfare of the family and of the community, while William was quick tempered, a good thinker and liked to argue. He was interested in politics. Louise, the oldest daughter, had married Julian Voelcker, a well educated gentleman, 20 years her senior. He taught her how to read and write English, and to love good literature. He had studied medicine in the old country and had a drug store in New Braunfels and was the first mayor. The younger children were doing well in school. Although Mrs. Karbach at times became homesick to see her parents, she was happy in her home, and glad that her children were having better opportunities than they could have had in the old country.

Divided During Civil War

They were accumulating property. The boys and Mr. Karbach were getting along with their cattle industry. Then war between the North and South was declared. Fritz joined the Confederacy immediately. John was eager to go but he was too young. He was happy when he found that he would be allowed to serve his State by hauling freight for the Confederacy from Bastrop to Indianola and Matamoras. It was a great comfort to the family that he would be permitted to come home often and to help care for things. Then, too, his earnings would be a great help. The question of slavery had been one of William's pet subjects for argument for a long while. He did not believe in slavery. So, he ran away and joined the Union army. Thus, the Karbach brothers were pitted against each other for a cause that each thought to be right. The family prayed that they would never meet in battle.

Finally the four long years of war were over and the brothers were home again. William returned with an empty sleeve. The girl to whom he was engaged before he entered the army was waiting for him. They married immediately. It was she who helped him to adjust himself to his new mode of living. She would walk along and guide the horses while he learned to guide the plow with one hand; or, sometimes she would hold the plow while he guided the horses. She sat on the wagon seat by him going to town, or probably to church, while he looped the lines around his neck and guided the team with one hand. When he became unduly excited in an argument, she always had a smile ready and would say, "Now, William, calm yourself. We have heard that before."

"Yes, mother, I know. But—"

"Now, there you go again. It isn't good for you to let yourself get so wrought up."

Fritz's horse had been killed in a battle. His comrades thought he was killed also. When he came to, he was lying near the body of an enemy officer. Fritz took his gun, and mounted Bonito, a beautful dapple grey horse belonging to the dead officer, and soon caught up with his company. He used the gun and the horse during the remainder of the war.

He was engaged to sixteen-year-old Emily Erck before he entered the army. Mail traveled slowly during those days. She only heard from him twice during the entire four years, and he did not hear from her at all. But, she, too, was waiting for him. While she was busy sewing, quilting, crocheting and embroidering beautiful things for her new home, Fritz went to Matamoras with John on one of his freighting trips, and bought lovely plaid mohair material for Emily's wedding gown. He also bought her an orchid Spanish shawl embroidered with bright colored flowers.

They were married in the little Methodist Church just across the river from her home. She had trimmed her wedding dress with black folds, and wore a black lace shawl as a fischu, and a little black poke bonnet. When the army of occupation stationed on "The Point" on the Guadalupe near the grove of elms heard there was to be a wedding at the church the band was sent to play the wedding march.

After the ceremony she mounted Bonito, Fritz riding behind her. The band played again and Bonito pranced off to the rhythm of the music. Thus they came home to their one-room shack on the ranch near the old Karbach home.

The numerous descendants of David and Emilie Karbach still live in New Braunfels and Comal county and other parts of Texas. Following in the example set by their pioneer paternal

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grandparents they are in the front rank of any good move for their communities. Among them there are substantial ranchmen, farmers, engineers, physicians, druggists, and two county judges.

During the World War there were no divided families. The grandsons served with the allies, while the ones left behind did "their bit" at home. That community was the first to go "over the top" in the second Liberty Loan drive. Members of the Karbach family are happy to have been part of that great service to their country.

Mrs. Karbach died in 1877, and Mr. Karbach died in 1888. Both are buried in the New Braunfels cemetery.

Home Production of Pasture Seed

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Radio Address by
R. R. LANCASTER,
Extension Pasture Specialist,
College Station, Texas

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TEXAS county agents report that farmers and ranchmen bought around a million and quarter pounds of grass and legume seed in 1938. Actually, I suspect that the amount was much more than that. But no matter how much was bought, there is a need for more. Right now there must be a million acres of rescue grass, and about that much more bur clover, going to seed, and millions of acres of land where a pasture of grass and clover would pay dividends next winter.

I wonder if you know just how much care and trouble is tied up with the pasture seed you buy. Commercial seed production is a highly specialized enterprise, one that requires trained and experienced operators. Seed growers and dealers whose reputations are established need the protection of strict regulations of commercial seed production and marketing to keep out ignorant and unscrupulous competitors.

When you buy seed, you have to depend on the honesty of the dealer, and this is especially important when you are getting seed for your permanent pasture. The prices reliable firms ask for their grass and legume seed have to be high, because they have to pay high prices if they want the quality their reputations call for.

The harvesting, threshing, curing and cleaning of commercial permanent pasture seed is an involved process and the slightest mistake results in poor germination. Seed too mature will shatter, so early harvesting is necessary. This makes for some green seed, and green seed heat and mold if care is not used in curing.

Commercial seed must be threshed and cleaned, and this is a difficult operation. The light, fluffy seeds of some species of native grasses and the hairy coats and husks and beards of others cause lots of trouble. I'm telling you this so that you can see that the commercial production of pasture seed is no business for the unskilled, and that the seed firms earn the money they get for their product.

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